

Divisions Affected – N/A

**CABINET
18 OCTOBER 2022**

**OXFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL
REPORT 2021-22**

Report by Interim Corporate Director for Adult Social Care

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to** note the contents of the report and its conclusions.

Executive Summary

2. The report summarises the work of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) and its partners over the course of the year 2021-22. It is a requirement set out in the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance that the Local Authority receive a copy of the report and that they “will fully consider the contents of the report and how they can improve their contributions to both safeguarding throughout their own organisation and to the joint work of the Board” (Chapter 14, para 161).

Background

3. Safeguarding Boards are required to share their annual reports with all statutory partners and those partners are expected to consider the report and its contents to decide how they can improve their contribution to both safeguarding throughout their own organisation and to the joint work of the Board (*S14.161, Care and Support Statutory Guidance*).
4. This report and the work of the Board will take on additional significance in light of the new Care Quality Commission Inspection regime, which will see the Local Authority inspected for the first time since Safeguarding Boards became a statutory requirement. Based on feedback received from the inspection pilot areas, the Board will be asked for its view on the Local Authority and how they discharge their safeguarding function under The Care Act 2014.

Key Findings

Board work during 2021-22

5. The local safeguarding partnership has continued to maintain a high standard of safeguarding work during a second year of COVID that has affected all partner organisations.
6. There has been an increase in safeguarding concerns across all types of abuse and neglect. This increase in concerns is replicated in other Local Authority areas across the country. There is no obvious reason behind this increase in concerns, but it is possible that this is linked to the drop in the number of safeguarding (Section 42) enquiries that have taken place as workers triage cases and complete more of the safeguarding work while it is still in the concern stage.
7. Despite challenging financial and workforce pressures and the against a backdrop of COVID, there is a narrowing gap between the life expectancy for people with a learning disability and the general population. The leading cause of death (cancer) is now the same as for the general population, COVID deaths were no greater for adults with LD than the rest of the population, and the clear line of sight between Commissioners and people in out of county placements.
8. The Making Safeguarding Personal approach has been championed throughout the year and there has been an improvement in the number of people who have defined what they wanted to happen as a result of the safeguarding work and who were satisfied with the work that was undertaken. This is excellent progress during a difficult year and demonstrates professionals are continuing to keep the person at the centre of their work with them, empowering them to make the decisions that are important to them and honouring that as much as they are able to whilst seeking to protect them.
9. The Board's annual frontline practitioner survey has indicated that there is still work to do to improve practitioner confidence with escalating concerns when there is a difference of opinion.
10. The Board's annual safeguarding self-assessment indicates that organisations continue to experience issues around recruitment, retention and resilience, which have been included in the impact assessment consistently since it was introduced.
11. As in previous years, Organisations also reported an increase in demand on their services as well as an increasingly complex individuals seeking our help and support.

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Board priorities for 2022-23 from the annual report (and mid-year current position)

12. Refreshing the links between strategic partnerships – during COVID-19 the focus of organisations has rightly been diverted to ensuring those most vulnerable in our society are protected as much possible. This had the effect of reducing the focus on strategic partnership work during this period and has led to some duplication of effort or blurring of responsibilities as groups tackled emerging issues separately rather than taking a coordinated approach.
13. Current Position - There is a piece of work underway on the Partnerships Protocol Framework, which is reviewing how the partnership Boards and group work together. It will address the challenges raised to the Board about efficient use of partnership meeting times on cross-cutting topics or emerging issues.
14. Improving Engagement – there is an extensive plan of work being undertaken by the Engagement Subgroup to better understand the views of the people of Oxfordshire about safeguarding as well as agreeing routes for their views being fed into the work of the Board to influence our work and hopefully improving our impact on adults with care and support needs.
15. Current Position - The Board have agreed funding for the Engagement group work. The group are currently reviewing possible organisations to approach to undertake the work.
16. Improving how we manage risk on a multi-agency basis – out of the work around homelessness, the Board developed the Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) process to address multi-agency risk and how it is managed. The work is new and throughout 2022-23 the Board will work to improve this process and will be formally reviewed at the end of the year.
17. Current Position - The Board have recently hosted a series of meetings to discuss and map out the multi-agency risk processes across the county. Some are primarily used in statutory services, such as Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings, others have very specific remits, such as the Anti-Slavery Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (ASMARAC) meetings. There are also ongoing discussions about the use of MARM for those young adults who have recently left children's services (18-21 years old), still have high levels of risk but do not meet statutory criteria for adult safeguarding. Meetings have been held with Hazel Cringle (Children's Services) to discuss the move from the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Process (MARAMP) in children's to the MARM in adults for these transitions cases.

Other Board priorities for 2022-23:

18. Preparing for CQC Inspection – The Board is working closely with the Local Authority who are leading on this to ensure that preparedness for the CQC inspection is as thorough as possible.

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19. Developing a Prevention Strategy and a Transitional Safeguarding Strategy – preventative strategies are strongly encouraged within guidance for Safeguarding Boards as well as in the CQC inspection framework. Transitional safeguarding is a complex area of work so the two Safeguarding Boards are working together to ensure that the strategy provides a clear framework for working together across our services for those who might otherwise fly under the radar until a crisis point is reached.
20. Safeguarding self-assessment – the annual self-assessment was circulated on 15th September for a deadline of 9th December. This self-reflective work will feed into the CQC preparedness and may be offered as evidence as part of the inspection. For the first year the practitioner questionnaire is going to be circulated to non-Board member organisations to gather a wider view on how frontline workers view safeguarding within Oxfordshire.
21. Cascading learning from reviews – the Board oversees three review processes; deaths of those with a learning disability, deaths of those who are homeless and the deaths or serious injuries of those harmed by abuse or neglect. The Board Officers are producing new 7-minute briefings on the lessons from reviews to give easily-digestible briefings for frontline workers.
22. Responding to training needs – The Board is running a series of workshops on mental capacity and homelessness, a modular programme of financial abuse training and is looking to rerun the incredibly successful trauma training.

Financial Implications

23. N/A – The Local Authority is not being asked to commit any further financial resources towards the Board beyond what is currently committed.

Comments checked by: Thomas James, Finance Business Partner,
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Legal Implications

24. N/A – There are no specific legal implications for the Local Authority if the current range of commitments is not being asked to commit any further financial resources towards the Board beyond what is currently committed.

Comments checked by: Kate Charlton, Interim Head of Legal,
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Staff Implications

25. N/A – There are no additional staff resources being requested by way of this report for the work outlined in the Annual Report.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

26. The Board has taken on a Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer to review the work of the Board and its partners, with a specific focus on the accessibility of safeguarding services across Oxfordshire for those belonging to any of the equality strands or otherwise have issues regarding inclusivity.

Sustainability Implications

27. The Board have moved the majority of its work to a virtual environment, reducing travel congestion, and no longer prints any materials for Board meetings or training sessions, instead making these available electronically.

Risk Management

28. The Board is made up of the partners who attend the meetings, supported by a small team in the Board Business Unit. If organisations do not continue to provide the level of engagement with the work of the Board it is likely it would fail to meet its duties laid out in statute and its accompanying guidance. As the Local Authority is the organisation charged under The Care Act 2014 to ensure the Board is established and running well, this would represent a reputational risk. It is also likely any such failings would be highlighted under the new CQC inspection framework and in their resulting published report.

NAME Karen Fuller, Corporate Director of Adult and Housing

Annex: The OSAB Annual Report 2021-22

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October 2022